

## TURNING ON THE SPOTLIGHT

BY CHARLES DARNTON

WE have heard distinctly in the theatre this week the rustle of the skirt—as far as it goes in length. With their own fair hands Lela Taylor and Gertrude Purcell polished off "Voltaire," while Anna Wynn O'Ryan, Helen S. Woodruff and Madelyn Sheppard offered "Just Because" as an excuse for their industry in the musical comedy field.

If the maidens who bobbed up on Monday night happened to leave out the play, they put in a lot of bright sayings by Voltaire that were pleasant to hear once more. Then again, if the authors of Wednesday night's "melody comedy" forgot to put in any comedy, they may be pardoned for making the truly feminine retort, "Well, you couldn't expect us to remember everything, could you?"

The interesting point is that these newcomers got before the public. Any one can write a play, but not every one can get it produced. In spite of all that theatrical managers say to the contrary, an unknown author has about as much chance of getting his play on the stage as he has of being struck by lightning or John Dos Passos has of being the guest of honor at an American Legion dinner.

THIS recognition of strangers in the cold theatrical world should be heartening to those obscure ones all over the country who are feverishly writing themselves down in play form. For two mere girls to leap into notice as Miss Taylor and Miss Woodruff have done is little less than amazing. Even Arthur Hopkins may feel a bit surprised now that he has time to sit down and look back upon the extraordinary feat.

But perhaps Mr. Hopkins will be kept on his feet during all his working hours catching plays hurled at him by undiscovered geniuses. They will doubtless regard him as their friend, their champion, their refuge, and feel drawn toward him. Finding himself in this honored position, Mr. Hopkins would do well to pull down his brown vest, wipe off his stern look, and assume a ministerial attitude expressive of an eagerly receptive mood.

Nor is Arnold Daly likely to be forgotten in the grand rush. He may, indeed, be carried completely off his feet by an onslaught of playwrights he has never heard of, but who have heard of him, and learned to love him as their hope and inspiration. They will see in him their favorite actor, one ready to help them by playing the heroes tucked under their arms. Knowing him as the kindly Voltaire with a soft heart beating beneath his jaunty robe they will come to him confidently, trusting, and crowd their riches upon him. Sure of his kindly nature, they may even break in upon him while he is breaking the morning eggs, crying, "Master, dear master, we are here!" And what will Daly do? Who can say? But it is pleasant to fancy him smiling his twister smile, raising a hand without clenching it, and saying "Bless you, my children," to them—and perchance saying something quite different to himself.

THERE is something almost pathetic in the plea of the returned actor that you let him linger with you a little while, or, better still, a long one. He seems to make it a personal matter, at any rate on first nights. It's so good to get back to his beloved New York that he begs you won't send him away abruptly. He has a way of putting it up to you—as though you had anything to do about it. You can't get up and assure him that you will keep him here if you have to live on bread and water to do it. All you can do is sit where you are and look sympathetic or foolish, according to your countenance. It's really very trying.

Walker Whiteside spoke in this appealing vein at the Comedy Theatre on Tuesday night. But, frankly, I don't know what to say to him by way of easing his mind, do you? Perhaps the most one can say is that he has a play, "The Birds," that is full of tricks, and remind him of "The Cat and the Canary." It, too, is as full of tricks as a kitten—and a success.

CAME away from a second visit to "Lilium" with mixed emotions. For one thing, the acting at the Forty-fourth Street Theatre is better than the original performance. In the bravado, spitting impudence and anguishing humor of Lily, and in the dumb pain and grief of the pitiful servant girl, Joseph Schildkraut and Eva Le Gallienne are now irresistibly human. But wouldn't the play be even more appealing, I wonder, if it ended silently with the

DO HE KEPT ON WALKING. Jones was now on his last legs. All night long he had been tramping the streets of London, for he had no money, no home, no bed, no friends—

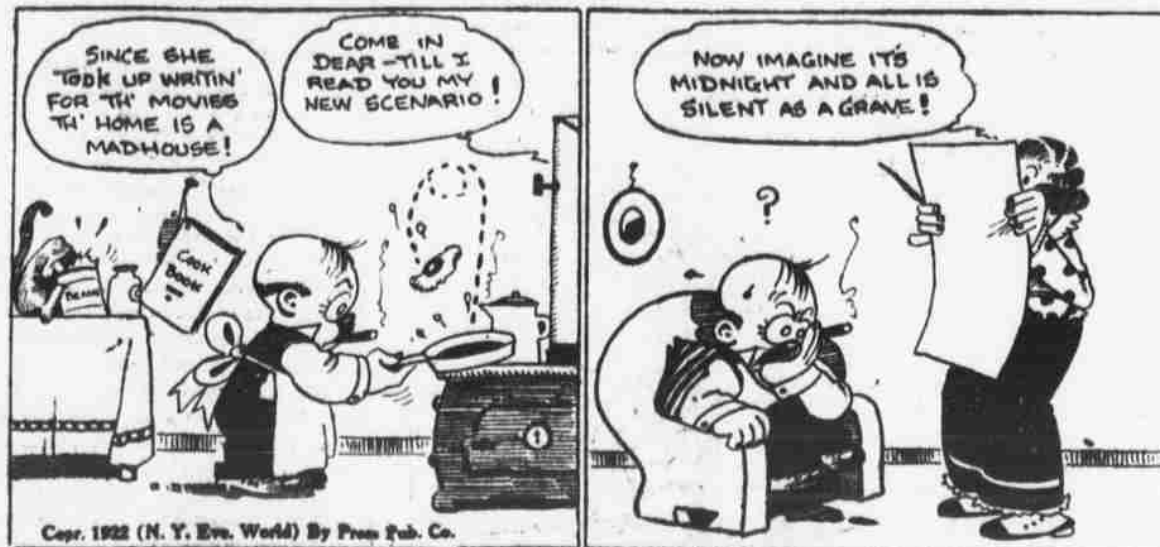
But, stay! Suddenly he realized that the road down which he was walking was Somersault Road and to Somersault Road had once resided Jenkins, his pal of former days. It was midnight, but he would throw himself upon Jenkins's mercy.

mother and child making the sign of the cross?

Now for the shock, the violent reaction: In the lobby stood a leather-junged youth bawling, "Get the Lilium song, 'Look Out, Here Come the Damned Police!'"

Thus the Theatre Guild? Art with the dollar-mark? No — "FIFTY CENTS A COPY!"

## THE BIG LITTLE FAMILY



## LITTLE MARY MIXUP



## About Plays and Players

By BIDE DUDLEY

WALTER WILLIAMS, Dean of the Missouri University School of Journalism, was the guest of honor at a dinner given at the Advertising Club the other evening by the Missouri University alumni of New York. Mr. Williams, after he had been properly led, made a pretty fair speech in which he said a lot of nice things about people fortunate enough to come from his home State. Homer Croy, humorist, was toastmaster, and he fairly shone in the job, especially on top. Editor Frank of the Century Magazine delivered a good talk written for him by his wife, and another impromptu speech was made by Louis Springer of the New York Herald. Mr. Springer used notes which proved indeed interesting. Walter Bryan of the Hearst forces spoke fluently also. He first denied the report that he is the uncle of W. J. Bryan, and then dwelt feelingly on his boyhood days in Hop-Scott, Mo. Another speech, made by a thin, hopeless looking newspaper man, was extremely good, we thought. Mr. Williams, however, radiant as a big ripe paw-paw in a new suit made by the Home Tailors of Columbia, carried off the honors of the evening. And when it was all over everybody went home to his mortgage, happy.

## BAILEY GETS REPUBLIC.

Oliver D. Bailey yesterday signed the papers whereby he becomes the lessee of the Republic Theatre for ten years.

## VERSE, MISS BERSE.

Arthur Rosenfeld has been educating Ruth Berse of "Lawful Larceny" in poetry. "She is a sweetie," he writes us. "This is what I think of her: Sweet and pretty and cute as can be, is a trim little miss in 'Lawful Larceny.' A vision of loveliness; my tribute in verse To dainty, ethereal little Ruth Berse, ARTHUR.

## JOE'S CAR

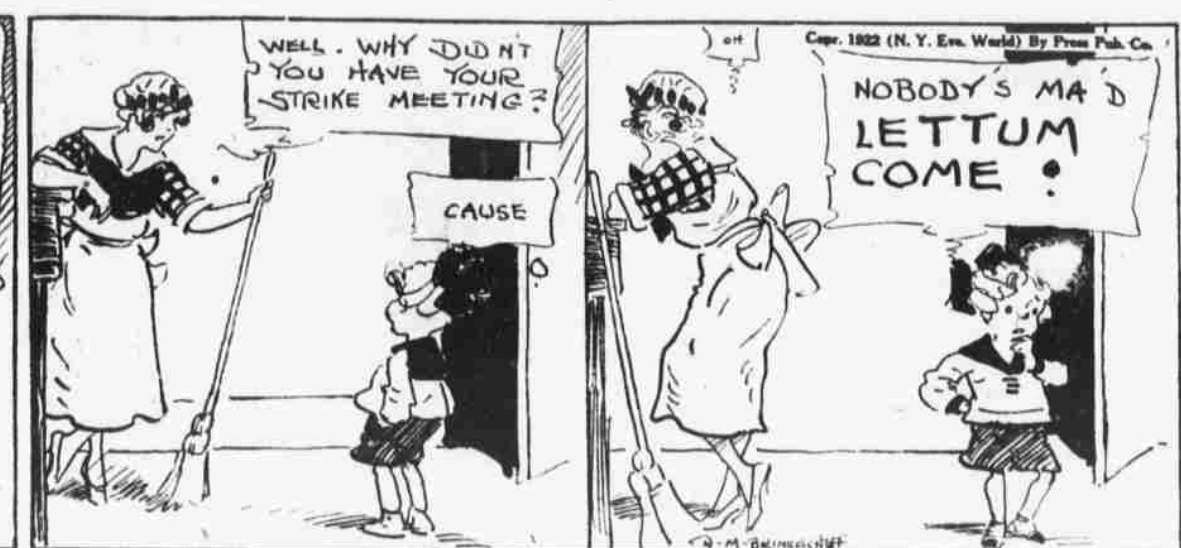


## Joe Has Had Plenty!

## The Other One, of Course!



## The "Mas" Struck First!



## Good Stories

**TAKEN BY STORM.**  
THE cruel winds tore at the waves as if to whelm them away. The man and the maid sat close together on the beach and watched the storm.  
"How the winds howl, darling," said she, shivering to make herself heard.  
"Yes," shrieked her friend.  
"Why does it howl?" she screamed.  
"Dunno. Perhaps it's got the toothache," he howled.  
"The toothache?" she howled.  
"Yes," he roared. "Haven't you heard of the teeth of the gale?"  
Then the wind howled worse than ever as she handed him back the engagement ring.—Stray Stories.

**BRIDEROOM TO THE RESCUE.**  
A NERVOUS curate in a Welsh coal mining district was officiating at his first wedding. The bride and bridegroom smiled encouragingly at his first blunders, but matters got serious when he turned to the bridegroom and asked: "Wilt thou have this woman as thy wedded husband?"  
The bride flattered, and the curate getting hotter and hotter, tried again. "Wilt thou have this man to this wedded woman?" he said.  
At this the bridegroom interferred. "Aw don't know what ye wants me to hev," he said, "but Aw coom here for the bride's shoulder—"an' Aw'll hev her or nowt."—Edinburgh Scotsman.

**SELF-SUPPORTING.**  
AN attorney of Los Angeles advertised for a chauffeur. Some twenty odd responded and were being questioned as to qualifications, efficiency and whether married or single. Finally, turning to a Negro chap, he said:  
"How about you, George: are you married?"  
Quickly the Negro responded: "Naw-sir, boss, naw-sir. Aw makes mah own livin'."—Judge.

**NOISY SOUP.**  
THE late George Loane Tucker, the movie pioneer, was noted in Los Angeles for his fastidious tastes.

Mr. Tucker was luncheon one day in a Los Angeles restaurant, and at a nearby table sat a movie king whose table manners left much to be desired. The man ate his soup in a specially noisy manner.

Eating away, he leaned toward Mr. Tucker and said:  
"This is darn good soup, George. 'It sounds good,' Mr. Tucker replied.—Detroit Free Press.

spend his time and money in Europe. Mary Pickford brought back forty-five gowns from Paris. She will now wear one of them in "Tess of the Storm Country."

Doug and Mary have moved into their new studio in Los Angeles. They have their name on the door, nevertheless.

Sol Lesser has taken offices in the United States and will make his headquarters there while making the Jackie Coogan feature.

That sound of "Snippity-Neep" that comes wafting from the West must be the echo of the shears and safety razor blades being used to cut Associated First National films. They are selling a lot of them this week.

Katherine MacDonald returned to Los Angeles yesterday from Truckee, where she, like a million others, more or less, have been shooting snow stuff.

Anita Stewart, when she starts making pictures again next fall, will have her own producing organization. Seems to us as though April 1 would be a good day to release some of those "fool" title pictures. There are a lot of them, you know.

A minister out in San Francisco protested and preached against "Foolish Wives." On the night of the anti-Straubel sermon the receipts doubled.

Walter Hiers, Paramount character comedian, doesn't balk at many things as long as it is in the script. He shied away, however, yesterday when he was called upon to make

## Screenings

By DON ALLEN

**BLUE-PENCILLED.**  
David O. Selznick, editor of Selznick News, is some editor.

Yesterday he sent out instructions to his staff and told them in no uncertain words what he wanted and what he didn't want in the way of "news." His pet aversions are ship launchings, baby parades and the laying of cornerstones. But he was wise enough to stipulate under what conditions such happenings could be pictured.

He wrote:  
"Launchings may be used if they break a bottle of reel champagne over the bow of the ship. (Get close-ups of label and the tears of the populace.)"

"Baby parades may be used if they show family of twelve children. Close-up of father (if in lucid interval)."

"The laying of a cornerstone may be shown if the Mayor misses and smashes his thumb. (Close-up of thumb. Cut Mayor's language.)"

**AFTER RECORD.**  
Cyril Chadwick is hot on the trail of Tommy Meighan as a long-distance film commuter. Cyril, who is now playing a leading role in Edward Dill's special, admits that Meighan may have it "on" him as far as land travel is concerned, but will not yield the ocean-leaping championship to any one.

"I've jumped the ocean so many times," says Cyril, "that pretty soon I'll be able to make it in one jump. One briny leap was to play a star part in the London made film 'Three Live Ghosts.' Then I huddled the waves in play Lord Brooks Fitzroy in this film."

"These are not the only ocean leapers and jumps I have made, but I'm proud of used to it now. Eh, wot?"

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY** next Tuesday in regard to the Chinese film situation.

Now, if there is one thing in the world that has been worrying us a whole lot of late, it is just this situation, and we, for one, will be mighty glad to know just what sort of a film the Chinese prefers with his chop suey, and what kind of a comedy should be served along with his Eggs Foo Young or chow mein.

We have been given to understand that the Chinese audience has not as yet developed the habit of reading subtitles aloud, but that the rattle of chopsticks is quite disconcerting. The coming meeting ought to throw a lot of light on all these puzzling features of the Mongolian movie muddle.

**THIS IS TOUGH.**  
Clarence Burton has his troubles. At least, he had them, but he's shaved one of them off now. That's where the kick comes in.

Clarence has been successfully harried behind a cute little lip-lam-brequin for years. Engaged to play a beardless part in "Blood and Sand," he gilded the sage-brush trimmings and shone forth clean shaven. Then they decided he was too large for the part, and a few moments later Director Rollin Sturgeon chose him for a part in "North of the Rio Grande" with a mustache.

"And now," moans Clarence, "for the first time in years, I'll have to paste on a lotta crepe hair."

**A WISE URCHIN.**  
Pauline Garon, who just now is Dick Barthelmess's leading woman in "Sonny," is firmly convinced that a certain nephew of hers would pass any mentality test with colors flying. She makes this deduction from next's first experience with a wish-bone.

"I dried the wishbone of a turkey for him," said Miss Garon, "and then explained that we were both to make a wish and that the one who held the longest half for the bone after a wiffled would ultimately get his wish."

"My nephew won. 'Now, don't tell any one your wish until after it has come true,' I warned him."  
"Then I can tell it right now," he shot back.  
"Why, what did you wish?" I asked him.  
"I wished I'd get the biggest half of the bone,"

**LEHR TELLS ONE.**  
Abraham Lehr, a Goldwyn Vice President, tells a story about an exhibitor who was looking over "The Old Nest" in preview with an idea of booking the film for his theatre.

Now, the rental price is always a regular skeleton of contention between the salesman and the prospect, and it isn't considered good business for an exhibitor to show he likes a film before this rather important feature has been settled.

As the lights flared on after the showing, the salesman noted at once that the prospective exhibitor had been weeping copiously.

"Ah," he enthused, "I see you liked it!"  
"Well," cautioned the theatre owner, "I cry at bad pictures too."

**STATIC.**  
Hugo Ballin has temporarily abandoned the intention of producing pictures on the Coast and has taken over the Biograph studios here. He starts on a new production Monday.

"When in Rome, don't eat Roman candies," advises Acsof's Film Folies. John S. Woody, formerly connected with Reelart Pictures Corporation, has been appointed General Manager for Selznick.

Tom Wilson, featured in "Reported Missing," has but one eye, yet he travels 3,000 miles each year to behold the opening of the "Follies." Needs that's where he lost his other eye.

Constance Talmadge and Harrison Ford will soon be seen in "Experiment in Marriage."  
George Arliss has been promising himself a vacation for years. This summer he will make good. He will